



Corporate Social Responsibility Report

Irish Continental Group is committed to good corporate citizenship, conducting its business with integrity and respect for others whilst remaining focussed on its business objectives.

ICG aims to

- Offer a positive employment environment.
- Safeguard the health and safety of employees and customers.
- Respect the environment and communities within which it operates.

Employment

We employ 1,500 people, approximately 900 of whom work at sea. Each of the Group's operations is run as a separate and distinct business unit, giving a high degree of individual responsibility to local management teams. The central HR function supports and advises the management teams across the Group.

ICG is committed to delivering quality products and an unrivalled customer experience. This requires that all our people understand and identify with our goals and are committed to them, while at the same time having their personal needs met.

Recruitment workshops are designed to identify people's natural abilities, ensuring we find the right people to join our seagoing team. Training and development is critical to maintain our developing organisation. At all levels, employees are encouraged to further their careers within the Group. The Group's training and development plan includes a comprehensive programme of statutory training for technical and seagoing staff, leadership development for senior management, and "people skills" and "coaching" for middle and junior management to encourage potential future leaders. Allied to this, the Group's Personal Development Policy encourages staff to further their education and training by supporting external education courses.

We recognise that feedback and goal-setting are important elements of job satisfaction providing opportunities for personal development and improved performance in line with the requirements of our business. We aim to facilitate these through regular review processes for all management and staff.

Where practicable we seek to promote and appoint from within, with most vacancies advertised internally. We believe that this offers a visible merit based path of career development, a key factor in staff motivation and retention. It also enables the transfer of knowledge and expertise across our business sectors.

We believe in fostering a positive working environment through, among other things, communication and support. We achieve this through:

- An annual "roadshow" whereby the Managing Director and his team personally visit each location to discuss the performance of the Group with an open question and answer forum;
- Staff newsletter and company information distributed by email and / or displayed on notice-boards and intranet;
- Staff opinion surveys to gain an understanding of the organisational climate and devise action plans with which to improve business performance;
- Regular consultation and information meetings with representative groups of managers and staff to examine current and potential future issues and to make recommendations for action;
- Positive employment policies that provide equal opportunities for all existing and potential employees. Our employee handbook provides details of our terms and conditions of employment, together with information on our policies and procedures;
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - an independent and confidential advisory and counselling service for any staff member experiencing personal or professional difficulties.

Our employees have a wealth of experience in the shipping industry and each plays an integral part in achieving and maintaining ICG's success.

Health and Safety

Irish Continental Group regards the safety, health and welfare of its employees and customers as a top priority. Their wellbeing is guarded through the strict adherence to statutory health and safety standards and international maritime regulations. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, imposes certain requirements on employers and the Group has taken the necessary action to comply with the Act, including the adoption of a safety statement.

ICG has developed management systems that instil a safety culture throughout all aspects of our operations, ashore and afloat. In our largest subsidiary, Irish Ferries, the Health and Safety Manager is responsible for ensuring that health and safety issues are identified, monitored and reviewed. He develops the company's internal policy and procedures, sets targets to monitor performance and verifies the implementation of internal codes and procedures. Through a regular programme of quality and safety audits, continued compliance to these high standards is maintained.

We provide the highest levels of safety and quality training to all our staff, providing each of our employees with health and safety information, instruction and training, as appropriate, to enable them to work safely and to contribute towards a safer working environment.

In addition to our own internal verification procedures we are subject to inspection by the relevant Health and Safety Authorities. Irish Ferries operates to the International Safety Management Code (ISM), which is the international standard for the safe management and operation of ships and for pollution prevention. Irish Ferries has successfully held the internationally recognised award for quality (ISO 9000) since 1996. In 2003 Irish Ferries achieved the new ISO 9000:2000 award.

A new international safety code, the International Ships and Ports Security code (ISPS), will become law in July 2004 and Irish Continental Group is putting in place all necessary arrangements to ensure full compliance with this code.

Environment

Irish Continental Group recognises that all forms of transport, including ships, have an unavoidable impact on the environment. We are committed to reducing negative impacts through:

- environmental awareness training for all our sea going staff;
- consistent strict compliance with the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78);
- minimising the consumption of non-renewable fossil fuels, including, for example, using electricity to power our cranes;

- using an oil recovery system to collect all waste oil from our ships, which is then sent for recycling;

- bulk purchasing to reduce number of deliveries and packaging, and segregation of all waste cardboard packaging for recycling;

- designing the hull of the Fast Ferry Dublin Swift to minimise wave generation, in order to minimise disturbance of coastal habitats;

- painting the hulls of all our ferries with tin-free non-toxic paints to avoid the release of harmful agents into the sea;

- keeping abreast of and meeting the latest national and international legislative developments;

- promoting customer awareness of the marine environment;

In 2003 we commissioned a trial of a fuel treatment facility on board our largest vessel, the *Ulysses*. This facility improves combustion thereby reducing exhaust gas pollutants. This trial will be conducted in 2004 and we hope it will be successful in reducing these pollutants. We also intend to introduce recycling to our Head Office facility in 2004.

We are committed to avoiding disasters or catastrophes. We manage physical or other risks that have the potential to significantly damage the financial position of the Group, its reputation, its environment, or its ability to provide services, and we have in place a major accident response plan for emergency situations.

Community

ICG continues to take an active interest in the communities within which it operates. Each separate business unit assists in local initiatives through sponsorship and organised events. We recognise the important role played by charities and community organisations within our communities and we are happy to help these organisations achieve their goals.

In 2003 we were proud to be involved in the 11th Special Olympics World Summer Games, where Irish Ferries was an official sponsor. Hosting the summer games involved the biggest transportation effort seen on the island of Ireland and Irish Ferries was delighted to play its part in ensuring everything went according to plan.